

## Sermon Outline.

CHRIST AND THE POOR AND THE CHURCH  
AND THE POOR.

Sermon No. 6.

THE METHOD.

*Mt. xiii, 33; Acts viii, 4; Rev. xxii, 17.*  
INTRODUCTION.

1. In our last we saw that remedy for the evils of our time is the kingdom of God. We saw also that Christ as King would establish this kingdom through the agency of the Holy Spirit and by the instrumentality of the church. The kingdom of God is the goal of this world, and the chief business of Christians is to bring about this great consummation.

2. Now another question arises: How shall this be brought about?

(1) Will the old method suffice? In all other departments of human activity we have introduced new and improved methods. One has well said that the difference between ox-cart and railroad civilization is a difference of method. That man now travels faster and does more work than his sires of a generation ago, is not because his inventive genius has created any new force; but it is because his inventive genius has discovered better methods of applying the force that is as old as the hills. These new and improved methods of labor have changed not only the whole face of society, but most of all they have changed the laborer himself. He is no more the ignorant slave of the rich. He is the peer of any intelligence. He reads books and papers as well as his master. He can converse intelligently upon the social, political and economical issues of the day. He is neither ignorant, nor indifferent about the great moral and religious questions of the time. This new order demands new methods. New political, new social and new religious methods are the imperative demands of our changed conditions. There is an almost universal feeling that the times are out of joint and that something radical must be done.

(2.) Methods proposed.

This universal feeling that something must be done—something radical, and that soon, has been the occasion of many panaceas.

(a) The anarchist says the present order of things is essentially wrong and that there is no hope of peaceable adjustment. His remedy is dynamite. Everything and everybody must be brought to the dead level of nature; and the shortest way to do this is to blow everything to atoms and start anew. His aim is to destroy our present social institutions and law that every man may be a barbarian and a law unto himself.

(b) The socialist agrees with the anarchist that our present institutions are radically wrong, and that the condition of the masses will never become better until these institutions are changed. Yet his method is more peaceable. He wants the government to become a great proprietor, to own everything and everybody, and to employ and distribute the other for the good of the whole. Anarchy says every fellow for himself; Socialism says every fellow for everybody else.

### I. THE CHURCH'S METHOD.

In the meantime what is the church saying and doing, what is her method. She believes the solutions to be found in the kingdom of God; but what is she doing to bring it about. Anarchy and Socialism have no objection to the ideal society we call the kingdom of God; what they object to is our slow way of realizing it. Our method, they say, is at fault.

1. What then is her method?

Almost the sole method is preaching. For centuries we have been trying to save the masses by preaching. The chief business of the pastor is to preach, and so he is now called the preacher. The chief business of the laity is to support the preacher and to provide an elegant place for him to preach, and to place around him such attractions as will draw people to hear him preach. That this is the common conception of Christian work is abundantly proved by the fact that the largest item in our contributions for Christian work is for the support of the pastor, that the second largest item is for building church houses, and possibly the third largest item is for music. This is further proved by the fact that all churches are clamoring for a man of eloquence and learning, one who can attract and hold a crowd. Mr. Lamb in his book "The

Great Commission," records an incident that illustrates this tendency. A man presented a letter for admission to the church of his choice in a certain village, and said brethren I want it understood in coming to you I am good for one hundred dollars a year and that is all. Don't expect me in the Sunday school, in the prayer meeting or in any other work of the church. My work will be to pay one hundred dollars a year. He was received without a protest. Yes, the common idea is that it is the business of the pastor to be holy and to do the work of saving the world, and that the laity has only to make money, enjoy the world and support the preacher.

2. The result of this method is a failure to do the work for which the church exists. The reports from the three largest Baptist churches in Chicago, with an aggregate membership of 3,724, show only 185 additions by baptism, and the cost of running these churches for the year was \$76,091.43. That is it took 100 persons one year to convert less than five souls, and each cost the church \$411. The year books of three leading denominations in the U. S. show that it took on an average 20 Christians one year to bring one soul to Christ. The least increase that Christ promised his ministers, following His methods was thirty-fold. That is instead twenty bringing one, one should bring at least thirty and possibly sixty or a hundred.

### II. THE TRUE METHOD.

It is clear that we are a failure. We not only are getting the "thirty-fold", but we are not keeping up with the increase of the world's population with our present methods and at our present rate the kingdom of God will never be established.

1. The method of Christ was personal touch. He sat down beside the sinner and held him in sweet intercourse until He won His way into his heart. Then He sent him to his home or village—as the woman of Samaria—to bring others in touch with Him. He went to the sinner and found him where he was.

2. The method of the early church was like that of the Master, personal. We read that the church at Jerusalem was scattered by persecution and that